

COMMITTEE ON D. C. MEETING IS ALMOST STOPPED BY PHONE

Anonymous Caller Tells Congressmen There Will Be No Gathering Today.

MAPES DISCOVERS "PLOT"

Questions Person Calling and Receiver Is Abruptly Hung Up.

An anonymous and mysterious telephone call to various members of the House District Committee informing them that there would be no meeting today, almost prevented the meeting of that committee.

Chairman Ben Johnson and other members have not yet ascertained who sent out the misleading telephone calls, but there is a suspicion that it was done for a definite purpose, and goes beyond the practical joke.

Congressman Mapes of Michigan, when told that the committee would not meet, failed to recognize the voice of the informant, and became suspicious. As soon as Mr. Mapes asked "Who are you?" the man at the other end of the telephone wire abruptly hung up the receiver.

Chairman Johnson sat in the committee room for nearly an hour this morning and was taken aback when almost a dozen members dropped in casually to ask why the meeting had been postponed. Mr. Johnson was quite angry over the performance, and has started an investigation to ascertain, if possible, who sent out the false telephone messages.

When Chairman Johnson learned that some one was tampering with the committee meeting different members of the committee were called over the telephone and sufficient number finally arrived to do business.

Some members of the committee are inclined to think that a person interested in one or more bills pending before the committee sought to prevent the committee meeting for fear these bills would be considered. It is not known at this time what bill caused the false telephone messages.

The District Committee decided today to authorize Chairman Johnson to prepare a unanimous consent calendar for the committee upon which shall be placed all bills now before the committee to which there is no objection.

These unopposed bills will be considered and reported early special meeting. The District Committee intends to make no report for the present on contested matters, as the House legislative program precludes consideration of any great quantity of District legislation at this session.

District Must Pay For Moving Mains

Comptroller Holds Water Department Must Provide for Change on Avenue Bridge.

Comptroller of the Treasury Warwick today ruled that the District Water Department must bear the expense of lowering the water mains on the new Pennsylvania avenue bridge because of the transfer of the Capital Traction Company's tracks to the structure.

He also held that the railway company must pave the space between its tracks and two feet additional on either side, from Twenty-sixth and Pennsylvania avenue to Twenty-ninth street.

The case was submitted to the Comptroller by the District Commissioners because the transfer of the company's tracks from the M street bridge to the new structure will place the electric conduits dangerously near the water mains across the new bridge. The commissioners believed the company should bear the expense of moving the mains further from the electric conduits. The Comptroller, however, ruled that the company did not wish to move its conduits, but was required by act of Congress to do so, and that any expense attending the removal of the water mains must be borne by the Water Department.

The Comptroller holds that when the Capital Traction Company pays one-third of the cost of constructing the bridge it will have discharged all its financial obligations in the matter except to repave between the tracks.

City Officials Pose For "Movie" Films

Commissioners Figures in Picture to Advertise Washington and Lincoln Highway.

Laying aside official cares for a moment, Commissioners Newman, Brownlow, and Kutz posed for the "movies" today. The picture was taken in front of the District building, and will be used as part of the film advertising Washington and the Lincoln Highway, which is to be shown all over the country under the auspices of the Board of Trade, Chamber of Commerce, and the Retail Merchants' Association.

The picture, showing scenes of life in the National Capital, is being prepared by the joint committee on the Lincoln Highway feeder.

Hearing on Fairchild Bill Will Be Held Tomorrow

The House District Committee will hold a hearing tomorrow morning on the Fairchild bill authorizing a merger of the Potomac Electric Power Company and the Washington Railway and Electric Company.

"BOOK OF HEART THROBS" SENT TO LABOR UNIONS

Tragedies that are every-day affairs in the families of underpaid Government employees, as pointed out in the "Book of Heart Throbs" in last Sunday's Times, are to be laid before labor organizations all over the country.

Officials of the recently organized Federal Employees' Union express themselves as highly gratified at this move by The Times to impress the Capital with the necessity for improvement in the clerks' conditions.

The organization has purchased enough copies of The Times containing the article to distribute to the central labor unions in all important cities. They are being sent out this week.

Houdini to Be Hanged In Straitjacket at High Noon Here Tomorrow

"Handcuff King" to Dangle 100 Feet in Air Before Crowds At 12:30 o'Clock.

WILL EXTRICATE HIMSELF

Expert Knot Tiers Will Superintend Exhibition, to Which All Are Invited.

Harry Houdini has been condemned to be hanged!

He will be hanged at 12:30 tomorrow in front of the Munsey building in plain view of all of the thousands of Washingtonians who can gather on Pennsylvania avenue.

The "Handcuff King" has escaped from everything the police or safety-first artists of all sorts have designed to confine a vicious criminal and now he will reach the end of his rope!

The end of the rope will dangle 100 feet in mid-air from the front of the Munsey building and Houdini will be attached to it by the feet with all the ingenious knots the police or anybody else can devise.

Arms To Be Rigid.

He will also have his arms securely bound to his body and his body made rigid with the most approved type of straitjacket. All of these things will be done to insure the thorough hanging of the worker of magic.

And Houdini declares he will hang only long enough to loose himself from his incumbrances!

He laughs at the proposition to hang him, and declares those in charge of the operation can go as far as they like. He guarantees that he will free himself, and it is agreed that he shall go free if he does get loose.

The procedure to be followed will be to confine Houdini in a regulation straitjacket. A jacket and two heavy attendants will be placed on either side of him. The attendants will be instructed to use the most approved jacket type from which no escape has ever been recorded.

Houdini hasn't seen the jacket that will be used and will not see it until they put it on him. The two attendants will see to it that the "Handcuff King" is placed in the jacket in a way that he will not be able to get out of it.

He also held that the railway company must pave the space between its tracks and two feet additional on either side, from Twenty-sixth and Pennsylvania avenue to Twenty-ninth street.

The case was submitted to the Comptroller by the District Commissioners because the transfer of the company's tracks from the M street bridge to the new structure will place the electric conduits dangerously near the water mains across the new bridge. The commissioners believed the company should bear the expense of moving the mains further from the electric conduits. The Comptroller, however, ruled that the company did not wish to move its conduits, but was required by act of Congress to do so, and that any expense attending the removal of the water mains must be borne by the Water Department.

The Comptroller holds that when the Capital Traction Company pays one-third of the cost of constructing the bridge it will have discharged all its financial obligations in the matter except to repave between the tracks.

City Officials Pose For "Movie" Films

Commissioners Figures in Picture to Advertise Washington and Lincoln Highway.

Laying aside official cares for a moment, Commissioners Newman, Brownlow, and Kutz posed for the "movies" today. The picture was taken in front of the District building, and will be used as part of the film advertising Washington and the Lincoln Highway, which is to be shown all over the country under the auspices of the Board of Trade, Chamber of Commerce, and the Retail Merchants' Association.

The picture, showing scenes of life in the National Capital, is being prepared by the joint committee on the Lincoln Highway feeder.

Hearing on Fairchild Bill Will Be Held Tomorrow

The House District Committee will hold a hearing tomorrow morning on the Fairchild bill authorizing a merger of the Potomac Electric Power Company and the Washington Railway and Electric Company.

The District Committee's hearing, a corporation Counsel Syme and officials of the two public service corporations are expected to attend.

The hearing will be concluded before the full District Committee, instead of a subcommittee.



HARRY HOUDINI.

GERMANS ADVANCE NEARER TO VERDUN

Haudremont Works and 700 Yards of Trenches Near Thiaumont Captured.

BERLIN, April 18.—Capture of important French positions north and northeast of Verdun in yesterday's fighting was announced by the war office this afternoon. The Germans took 1,700 prisoners.

The captured positions include the works south of Haudremont farm, near Pepper Heights, and 700 yards of French trenches on the heights north of Verdun, northwest of Douaumont. The French troops attempted to attack in the Callette Woods, near Douaumont, but were met by German artillery fire and held to their trenches at practically every point.

In the Woivre region and on the front southeast of Verdun French artillery was active throughout yesterday and last night.

Violent Attack Made On East of the Meuse

PARIS, April 18.—German troops, from five different directions aggregating 100,000 men, participated in yesterday's violent attack against the French lines east of the Meuse, it is officially announced.

In last night's fighting, the Germans were partially thrown back from a first line trench they penetrated in Chaufour forest, northwest of Douaumont. The bombardment of Hill 304 is increasing in violence.

The Germans attacked with the greatest violence on a ragged front, extending from the Meuse in a southeasterly direction to the Douaumont-Urnes road.

The first blow fell against the French barriers in the narrow ravine southeast of Pepper Heights, the scene of furious fighting ten days ago.

Time and again the grey-clad legions piled up against the French works in fruitless charges. The ravine and its wooded slopes were swept by a steady stream of shrapnel and machine gun fire until the gorge itself was choked with bodies.

Repeated in this attack, the Germans extended the fighting on both flanks. The heaviest blow was struck on the eastern wing. Gathering in two divisions, the German commanders hurled them against the French line in Chaufour and Abian woods, driving southward in an attempt to reach Douaumont-Bras road.

The second assault carried the enemy into the advanced positions and forced the surrender of a redoubt and its connected advanced trenches forming an exposed salient northwest of Douaumont village.

The French successes reported in today's communiqué from the war office apparently were against these advanced positions taken by the Germans yesterday.

STOP U-BOAT WAR ON MERCHANTSHIPS, LAST WORD OF U. S.

Note Expected to Go to Berlin Tonight Said to Leave This Doorway to Germany.

DECLARES PLEDGES BROKEN

Indictment Sums Up Submarine Case and Alleges Array of Proofs.

America's last word to Germany on the submarine issue probably will leave for Berlin tonight. A lengthy note, remarkable for its dispassionate language but unmistakable as to its purpose, has been completed by the President himself.

The message was laid before the Cabinet meeting today. This afternoon it probably will be shown to Chairman William J. Stone, of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, and, perhaps, to Chairman Henry D. Flood, of the House Committee. It may be sent to the cable office before nightfall.

The communication is said to leave but one doorway open to Germany, if she would avoid a diplomatic break with the United States. She must abandon her submarine warfare against merchant ships.

With painstaking care the note sums up the indictment against Germany. Beginning with the still unsettled case of the Cunard liner Lusitania, case after case is cited, the total being regarded by this Government as comprising an overwhelming array of proofs that Germany has violated the rules of humanity and broken her pledges.

Recalls Berlin Promises.

It tells of the cases which immediately followed the Lusitania, and the promises given by Germany at the time of the sinking of the Aconcagua. It reminds Germany that the United States, willing to subordinate her past grievances to the interest of humanity, was prepared to accept these promises when Germany issued for her decree, stating that on and after March 1 she would begin attacking all armed enemy merchantmen without warning.

Almost immediately, the note goes on to say, there began a succession of cases of submarine attacks, the most noteworthy feature of which was the fact that, whereas the March 1 decree was limited to armed enemy liners, most of the attacks were against unarmed ships, many of them being of neutral nationality.

The note draws the inference that either Germany had recanted her past pledges, or that her submarines have been unable to distinguish the character of the ships that have been made the target.

Referring to believe the latter view is the correct one, the note insists that circumstances have demonstrated the utter impossibility of pursuing the submarine campaign without transgressing the limits of neutrality, and for this reason the United States feels called upon, solemnly and with due regard for the good relations between the two countries that cannot otherwise exist, to insist that Germany abandon the submarine warfare.

At Parting of Ways.

Officials of the Administration thoroughly appreciate the fact that the relations between the two countries are at the parting of the ways; that within two weeks Germany, by her reply, may force the United States to sever these relations.

At the same time the President is said to be determined to settle the matter once and for all, and has so drawn the note that Germany cannot fail to realize this.

The Cabinet was in session longer than it has been for some time. Although the matter of the reply was left to the White House, the gravity of the situation, they declined to make any comments.

Liner Zent U-Boat Victim, Probers Find

Torpedoed Without Warning With Loss of 49 Lives, Investigation Discloses.

LONDON, April 18.—The British liner Zent, which was sunk with a loss of forty-nine lives, was torpedoed without warning, an admiralty investigation disclosed today.

It was also announced that the Dutch steamer Eridik, beached on the coast of England, was the victim of an enemy submarine.

The Dutch steamer was most conspicuously marked. She carried the Dutch colors painted on her sides in four places and a rigid signal on the foremast and mainmast. Her name and port of registry were painted in large letters on her side.

Fragments of steel and brass found in her hull leave no room for doubt that she was torpedoed. The investigation disclosed.

Under present plans, the prime minister will explain matters to Parliament tomorrow.

LONDON, April 18.—A possible crisis in the cabinet has been delayed until at least tomorrow by the official announcement that Premier Asquith will not make his expected statement on recruiting in Commons this afternoon.

Victims of Treachery in Mexican Town.



PAPEN'S SAID SEIZED AFTER LIVELY FIGHT

Von Igle, Arrested Under Plot Indictment By U. S. Agents, Puts Up Struggle.

NEW YORK, April 18.—Wolf von Igle, secretary to Capt. Franz von Papen, recalled German military attaché, was arrested in his office at 60 Wall Street by agents of the Department of Justice today after a lively fight. Four special agents overpowered von Igle, when he attempted a get-away.

Von Igle was indicted yesterday with von Papen, Capt. Hans Fauscher, husband of Mrs. Gaddis, and others in connection with plots to blow up the Welland canal and put bombs upon allied ships. His name was kept secret until today, however.

Agents of the Justice Department called at his office yesterday, but it was said he was out of town, returning today. They found the former attaché's secretary.

Von Igle at first refused to admit Joe Baker, assistant to William Offley, head of the department's investigating bureau, and his three deputies.

Baker finally convinced him they were coming in, forcibly, if necessary, and the door was opened. Von Igle hurried to the safe as Baker and his men entered slammed the door shut and threw on the combination, locking it.

Von Igle declared he would not surrender embassy papers, and failing to secure documents he expected to take from the safe Baker ordered von Igle to come with him.

Von Igle endeavored to escape. Before he had gone far toward the door Baker and his three assistants were upon him. They struggled about the office, overturning furniture, but the door was opened. They struggled about the office and marched the secretary away.

When taken before Federal Judge Howe, von Igle refused to plead to the indictment. He declared he was not represented by counsel and also that the Government had no right to arrest him as he was connected with the German embassy.

He protested against the seizure of any papers in his Wall street office, saying that was ambassadorial territory and inviolable.

Judge Howe advised von Igle to procure counsel at once. He adjourned the hearing until 4 p. m. that the prisoner might get a lawyer, and told him his rights would be safeguarded.

Less Beer in England.

LONDON, April 18.—Under government orders restricting the importation of beer making apparatus, English brewers will reduce their output by one glass of beer in every eight.

RENEW HUNT FOR VILLA; DEATH ONLY HOAX, SAYS BELL

Army Officer Declares Juarez Officials Fabricated the Story of Bandit's Death—Orders Go Out From San Antonio for New Troop Activity.

DEFENSIVE PLANS ARE PERFECTED

Lines of Communication Are Given Greater Protection—Troops Are "Digging Themselves In" to Prevent Further Hostile Acts By Carranza Forces.

SAN ANTONIO, Tex., April 18.—On receipt of a dispatch from General Bell, at El Paso, declaring that the report of Villa's death had evidently been manufactured in Juarez, army officers directed a renewal of the search for the bandit leader today.

General Bell officially reported to Major General Funston declaring his belief that the entire story of Villa's body having been found was a fabrication and originated at Juarez.

A statement from Consul Letcher at Chihuahua further discredited the story, asserting that dispatches from Cusiuhuirachic made no mention of the body.

Early advices to headquarters told of a gathering of scattered American detachments near Satevo.

Indications point to resumption of the bandit hunt on a scale limited to conform to the present line of communications. This is believed to mean that Funston intends to make the best of the facilities at hand, meantime hoping for permission to use the Mexican railways or sanction for a new line with the American base near Presidio, Tex.

TAKES STEPS TO DEFEND SUPPLY LINE.

EL PASO, April 18.—The Villa hunt is a secondary matter to the guarding of American lines of communication, according to army officers here.

Concentration of troops to prevent renewal of such attacks as that at Parral is being undertaken.

Brigadier General Pershing, it is understood, has reported to Major General Funston that his troops are "digging themselves in" and are prepared to meet any move of Carranzista troops or bandit bands. He has established himself at Namiquipa, where he can be in touch with all parts of the line and better meet any hostile move.

American officials here are ready to accept General Carlos Carranza's identification of the body said to be that of the bandit chief and advise the withdrawal of troops as having accomplished the object of the expedition.

Certification of Villa's death by officials of the de facto government is all that can be expected, say officials here, although it is expected that no obstacle will be placed by Carranzista officials in the way of further confirmation by the American authorities.

The question whether the body, presumably being taken into Chihuahua City, is that of Villa is still holding attention, but the safety of the American expedition, following the Parral incident and the withdrawal request from General Carranza is uppermost in the minds of army chiefs along the border.

PERSHING LEAVES SATEVO.

Pershing has left his advanced base at Satevo and returned to his Namiquipa staff headquarters. At Namiquipa, about midway along the lines of communication, he can keep a closer watch on the situation and better direct his army. No American troops are now believed to be south of Santa Cruz.

If Villa is not dead, but has escaped into Durango, as formerly reported, the American pursuit has apparently been halted. If the body reported exhumed west of Satevo is not Villa's, neither the United States nor the Mexican authorities have any adequate idea of the bandit chief's whereabouts, they admit.

Mexican officials, professing to have direct knowledge of the finding of Villa's body near San Francisco Borja, claim that cutting of wires last night prevented receipt of further information today.

While the failure of the Mexicans to produce the body